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AI fakes of accused U.S. press gala gunman flood social media

Washington, United States

Facebook has been over-run with low-effort AI fakes inventing biographical details and celebrity connections for the man charged with trying to assassinate Donald Trump at a Washington press gala Saturday. Trump and senior administration officials were evacuated from the White House Correspondents' Association dinner as sounds of gunfire rang from a floor above the ballroom, where the suspect had attempted to sprint past security.

Within hours of authorities identifying the suspect as Cole Tomas Allen, 31, of California, AI-generated images depicting him beside numerous celebrities pinballed across Facebook in posts saying he was their "former driver," "assistant" or "production crew member."

An AFP investigation found more than 50 public figures falsely associated with Allen, from actors Tom Hanks and Sydney Sweeney to musicians Chris Brown and



This image released by U.S. President Donald Trump via his Truth Social account (@realDonaldTrump) shows a person he claims to be the alleged suspect in the shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Dinner on the ground after being apprehended on April 25, 2026.

Taylor Swift.

Politicians including former U.S. president Barack Obama and Canada's Pierre Poilievre were also falsely implicated, as well as Pope Leo XIV and NBC News anchor Savannah Guthrie.

Meta did not immediately respond to AFP's request

for comment.

The fakes reflect an online ecosystem saturated with content known as "AI slop." Once largely focused on celebrities, generative content has quickly scaled to portray individuals like Allen, whose online presence was limited.

"Two years ago, you probably wouldn't have been

able to make those images of him, because we could only really make compelling fakes of celebrities who had a large digital footprint from which the AI systems had been trained," said the University of California, Berkeley's Hany Farid, who is also chief science officer at GetReal Security. "Now, all I need is a single image

of you."

Aaron Parnas, an independent journalist whose likeness appeared in AI-enabled posts claiming Allen worked for him, pleaded on Facebook for people to report the "completely fake" images.

"This is extremely dangerous," Parnas told his followers.

- 'Designed for virality' -

A separate rush of posts falsely claimed Allen had been on staff for over 40 different professional and collegiate sports teams, with AI-generated visuals dressing him in gear for teams across the NFL, NHL, NBA, WNBA and NASCAR.

Many of the renderings appear based on the picture from a tutoring company's post recognizing Allen as "teacher of the month" in December 2024.

The template-driven format resembles the output of content mills that mass-produce made-up clickbait stories, said digital literacy expert Mike Caulfield. □

Baby on board: U.S. woman gives birth on cross-country flight

New York, United States

A Delta Air Lines flight got a surprise passenger when a pregnant woman on board gave birth before the plane arrived at its final destination, the U.S. airline said Monday.

The five-hour flight was heading from the southeastern city of Atlanta, Georgia on Friday evening to the northwestern city of Portland, Oregon, where it was scheduled to arrive around 10 pm local time. The baby apparently could not wait that long, according to the airline, and was born while the flight still had about 30 min-

utes to go.

"We extend our sincere

thanks to the crew and medical volunteers on

board who stepped in to provide care to a customer onboard prior to landing in Portland," a Delta Airlines spokesperson said in a statement to AFP, adding that they "wish the new family all the best."

Two nurses and a doctor who happened to be among the 153 passengers on the flight assisted with the birth.

The flight's four cabin crew members also helped, with Delta Air Lines saying they "undergo comprehensive medical training to assist during situations like this." The crew called air traffic control for an emergency

landing, and they were met with emergency medical personnel upon arriving on the ground.

A Port of Portland spokesperson said mother and baby arrived in stable condition.

Some airlines have restrictions on when pregnant women can fly, refusing passengers to fly within a certain time frame of their expected due date or requiring a doctor's certificate, but Delta imposes neither such limitations.

U.S. media on Monday shared photos of the woman and her newborn, a baby girl. □



A Delta Air Lines plane is towed from the gate before takeoff at Hollywood Burbank Airport on January 29, 2026 in Burbank, California.

'Two kings': praise and a royal crush as Trump hosts Charles

Washington, United States

Donald Trump has never made a secret of his love for royalty. But the US president revealed Tuesday it runs in the family -- his mother had a crush on King Charles III.

The surprising revelation was part of a torrent of flattery, pomp and circumstance unleashed by Trump as Charles and Queen Camilla visited the White House.

For the British side it will come as a relief that Trump's gushing praise for the royals effectively papered over major diplomatic tensions over the war in Iran.

But for 79-year-old Trump-accused by critics of wanting to be a king himself it seemed very personal.

In a speech on the White House lawn, the Republican recalled how his Scottish-born mother Mary loved the late queen Elizabeth II and was "glued to the television" whenever she appeared.

"I also remember her saying, very clearly, 'Charles, look, young Charles. He's so cute,'" Trump said with a chuckle.

The 77-year-old king grimaced in mock embarrassment as Trump turned to look at him, then waved as if to say carry on which Trump did.

"My mother, my mother, had a crush on Charles. Can you believe it? Amazing. How I wonder what she's thinking right now."

Trump then went on to hail Elizabeth, who died in 2022, as a "very, very special woman who is very greatly missed on both sides of that mighty Atlantic."

- 'Live in Buckingham Palace' -

Moments before the royals arrived, Trump had joked about being in line to the British throne.

"Wow, that's nice. I've always wanted to live in Buckingham Palace!!!" Trump posted on his Truth Social network about a story in the Daily Mail saying he and Charles were very distant cousins.

"I'll talk to the King and Queen about this in a few



U.S. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump greet Britain's King Charles III and Britain's Queen Camilla upon arrival at the South Portico of the White House in Washington, DC, on April 27, 2026.

minutes!!!"

The White House was even less subtle. "TWO KINGS," it posted on X, with a crown emoji and a picture of Charles and Trump.

For Trump's critics, it was a all little close to the bone. Trump's assault on the limits on presidential power, and his renaming of buildings after himself and grand plans for a triumphal arch, have sparked a series of "No Kings" protests during his second term.

Trump meanwhile admitted that it was "ironic" to be giving such a pomp-filled welcome to a British monarch in the 250th anniversary of US independence from the British crown.

But British officials will have been relieved to hear Trump say that the United States had "no closer friends" than the British.

It came as a stark contrast to his recent tirades against British Prime Minister Keir Starmer for failing to back the Iran war.

Trump went further, hailing the the two countries' long history of military cooperation, despite recently mocking Britain's navy.

"The soldiers who once called each other Redcoats and Yankees became the Tommies and the GIs who together saved the free world," he

said.

- 'Anglo-Saxon courage' -

The U.S. president appeared in a jovial mood, even joking about the length of his own marriage to Melania Trump -- a day after calling for the sacking of comedian Jimmy Kimmel for likening the First Lady to an "expectant widow."

Kimmel made the joke days before an alleged attempt to assassinate the president.

Yet Trump's speech also struck an unexpected note. Despite American pride at ousting the British to create their own nation 250 years ago, the Republican leader repeatedly emphasized the common heritage between Britain and the United States. □

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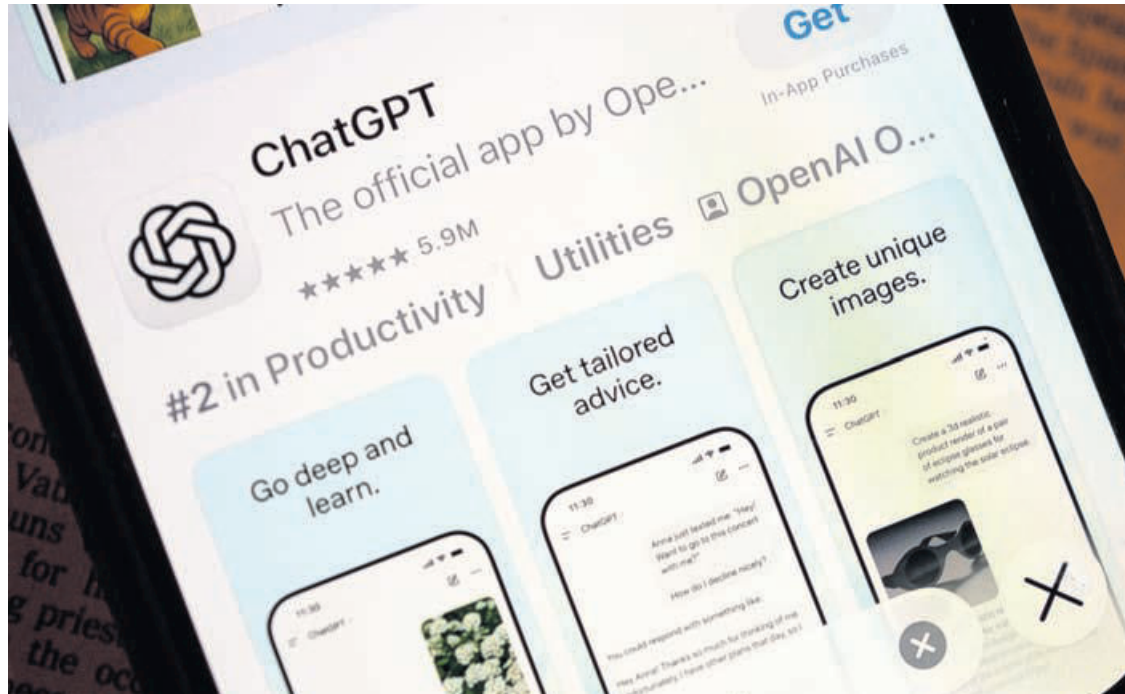
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AI firms flex lobbying muscle on both side of Atlantic

Paris, France

AI developers are ramping up efforts to win over the hearts and minds of officials in Europe and the United States, hoping to sway governments as they weigh high-stake regulatory frameworks for the ever more powerful technology. Flush with cash, the firms are also wooing the general public, insisting that artificial intelligence will be a force for good and not a destroyer of jobs or an existential threat for humanity. ChatGPT maker OpenAI unveiled this month a 13-page "Industrial Policy for the Intelligence Age" that calls for new taxation and expanded safety nets to ensure society withstands the arrival of superintelligent systems.

It has even bought TBN, a technology-focused talk show, to help shape the narrative. But the policy document also came just days after a public backlash forced the company to halt plans for a sexually explicit chatbot. OpenAI has also faced legal challenges from families of teenagers who say ChatGPT caused harm and even suicide among young people, prompting the company to introduce an



The ChatGPT app by OpenAI is shown on March 03, 2026 in Chicago, Illinois.

age-verification system. "This is a turning point" for the industry, and companies "are spending a fortune to try to get favourable measures passed in their patch", said Alexandra Iteanu, a Paris-based lawyer specialising in digital law.

- Politicians in pocket? -

The AI industry has transformed Washington lobbying at extraordinary speed, with more than 3,500 federal lobbyists one-fourth of the total working on AI issues last year, a 170 percent increase over three

years, according to Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy group. The established giants like Meta, Google and Microsoft still dominate spending, but AI start-ups like OpenAI and Anthropic have rapidly built out their Washington presence, hiring elite firms and expanding in-house policy shops.

Anthropic for example has focussed its message on promoting AI safety and tighter regulation. But OpenAI is also actively pushing the industry's top legislative priority of preventing US states from pass-

ing their own laws governing AI, an effort that has twice failed in Congress but remains very much alive, backed by a sympathetic White House.

The influence campaign has moved into electoral politics, with a pro-AI campaign called Leading the Future assembling a \$100 million war chest to back AI friendly candidates in the 2026 midterms.

President Donald Trump, a fierce opponent of AI regulation, counts OpenAI's co-founder Sam Altman and its

president Greg Brockman among his biggest donors. European regulators are also feeling the heat, with the French start-up Mistral recently presenting in Brussels a 22-point plan to accelerate AI development on the Continent.

Lobbying outlays by the tech industry have surged 55 percent since 2021 to reach 151 million euros (\$177 million) last year, according to study by the Corporate Europe Observatory and LobbyControl, a nonprofit.

'Concentration of wealth'

For Margarida Silva of the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO, a Dutch nonprofit), AI firms are working from playbook of the oil and smoking industries, but with one major difference.

"They're just the wealthiest companies in the world, so they have a lot of money that they can use to put towards lobbying," Silva said. "When you have such intense corporate lobbying that is based on having such a concentration of wealth, and that is standing in the way of public interest regulations... we are really talking about a democratic threat," she added. □

China's WeRide eyes 200,000 autonomous cars by 2031 with Lenovo deal

Beijing, China

Chinese tech firms WeRide and Lenovo will expand their partnership to deploy 200,000 autonomous vehicles globally over the next five years, a WeRide statement said on Monday.

WeRide, based in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, is a key player in Beijing's bid to champion the burgeoning autonomous driving sector. The firm, which listed in New York in 2024 and then in Hong Kong last year, holds autonomous driving permits in eight markets, including China, the United States, France and Saudi Arabia.

Beijing-based consumer

electronics giant Lenovo provides the technological hardware needed to power WeRide's autonomous vehicles under their partnership agreement.



Visitors try out a WeRide autonomous vehicle at the Beijing Auto Show in Beijing on April 26, 2026.

WeRide's statement on Monday unveiled an "expanded collaboration with Lenovo... to accelerate the large-scale commercialization of... auto-

nous driving worldwide".

"Starting 2026, the two companies expect to jointly deploy 200,000 autonomous vehicles (AVs), including Robotaxis, globally over the next five years, marking one of the industry's most ambitious efforts to scale autonomous mobility," it said.

Company executives were seen in a picture accompanying the statement shaking hands at a signing ceremony on the sidelines of Auto China 2026 -- the world's largest car show, currently underway in Beijing.

"Autonomous driving is entering a critical phase of commercial deployment,

with industry competition shifting from pure technological capability to cost efficiency and scalable deployment," WeRide founder and CEO Tony Han was quoted as saying. It is projected that robotaxis will make up a substantial proportion of the overall fleet of shared passenger vehicles operating in China by 2035.

This would also establish China as the largest robotaxi services sector, capturing more than half the global market share. Listed Chinese ride-hailing companies Didi and Cao-cao have both included autonomous driving services in their future growth plans. □

Cut off from the West, Muscovites rediscover Russian 'roots'

Moscow, Russia

At a cooking school in Moscow, Yulia Fedishova was preparing a "smetannik": a traditional Slavic layer cake with a sour cream topping. The "Lunch a la Russe" master class she was attending on the secrets of classic Russian dishes is just one example of how many Muscovites are trying to reconnect with their ancestral "roots" amid the war in Ukraine.

The push is encouraged by the Kremlin as Russia faces deepening isolation from the West.

"In such troubling times, you want to return to something familiar, to become closer to your roots in order to find calmness and balance," said Fedishova, a 27-year-old corporate trainer.

Whereas before the war, fondness for traditional pastimes and cuisine may have been dismissed as parochial in big-city Western-inspired Russia, now it is all the rage.

Facing difficulty travelling to Europe and steeped in an ultra-patriotic drive from the Kremlin, many Russians have turned to the tastes and style of their Tsarist and Cold War-era ancestors. Village foods like cloudberries and jam from pine



Participants prepare beef cutlets during the "Lunch a la Russe" master class at the Novikov cooking school in Moscow on April 16, 2026.

cones have resurged as a popular ingredient in teas and cakes in Moscow cafes.

Trips to the banya the Russian steam bath that involves being flogged with a birch branch and, in winter, jumping into the snow have surged, replacing visits to modern-style spas. Much to the delight of President Vladimir Putin, the kokoshnik, an elaborate traditional Russian headdress, has even made a comeback.

"I've been told that we have a revival of a Russian tradition young women are going to events, or going out to bars and so on, wearing kokoshniks and traditional Russian outfits," the Kremlin chief said last October.

"You know, it's not a joke. It makes me very happy."

- 'Retreat' -

The drive comes both from the top -- with Putin pushing Russia to ditch Western values and embrace its break

from the West and from below, with organic and cultural bottom-up initiatives. Foreign social networks are banned or restricted, independent media have been forced into exile and Western society routinely bashed as decadent, godless and debauched by officials and on state TV. Cultural links have diminished since Russia launched its military offensive in 2022. There are no direct flights to the West and obtaining a visa to visit the EU or the

United States has become much more complicated. "We used to travel a lot, saw Europe, and know it by heart," Natalia, a well-off 39-year-old from Moscow, told AFP.

"But I don't want to go there anymore," she said, blasting what she called "passport discrimination". "I've never supported the West's policy of lumping us all together regardless of our views -- just as I've never supported what's happening in our country now."

In the early 2010s, two-thirds of Russians described themselves as pro-European, Denis Volkov, head of the Levada Centre independent pollster -- labelled a "foreign agent" by Moscow told AFP.

"Now the situation is exactly the opposite," he said. "It's kind of a retreat into our own identity against the background of Russia's isolation."

At the same time, nationalism and patriotism are surging.

The proportion who see Russia as "one of the best countries in the world" has more than doubled since the mid-1990s up from 36 percent to 76 percent, the Levada Center found. □

Indian billionaire's son offers home for Escobar's hippos

New Delhi, India

An Indian billionaire's son offered on Tuesday to take hippos descended from those introduced to Colombia by drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, rather than have the animals killed.

Anant Ambani, the son of tycoon Mukesh Ambani, said he had formally requested the Colombian government to stay a decision to kill the animals, which have wreaked havoc on rivers in the South American nation.

Instead, he has asked to allow the "safe, scientifically-led translocation that would bring the 80 animals to a permanent home" at his Vantara animal centre. The vast zoo in India's western state of Gujarat

bills itself as the "one of the world's largest wildlife rescue, care and conservation centres".

Vantara is already home to hundreds of elephants, as well as 50 bears, 160 tigers, 200 lions, 250 leopards and 900 crocodiles, among other animals, according to India's Central Zoo Authority.

Experts have repeatedly sounded the alarm on Vantara's massive animal intake, including the import of critically endangered and rare species. Escobar brought hippos which are native only to Africa and can weigh up to several tonnes to Colombia in the 1980s.

After Escobar's death, hip-

pos from his private zoo made a new life in the lush river banks of the Colombia's Magdalena River where they have attacked fishermen, prompting moves to cull them.

Anant Ambani, son of the billionaire head of the multinational conglomerate Reliance Industries, said he had submitted a detailed plan to give the animals a new home at Vantara. The animal centre is sited alongside the Reliance Jamnagar Refinery Complex, which the conglomerate says is the world's largest crude oil refinery. Summers there can get extremely hot, with temperatures soaring above 40C. Ambani's proposal sets out a veterinary-led cap-

ture and transport, as well as the creation of a "purpose-designed naturalistic setting" for the hippos, according to a statement.

"Vantara has the exper-

tise, infrastructure and resolve to support this effort, entirely on Colombia's terms," the statement said. □



Wild hippos -- descendants from a small herd introduced by drug kingpin Pablo Escobar -- eat grass as they roam near houses in Doradal, Antioquia Department, Colombia, on April 23, 2023, close to the Hacienda Napoles theme park, once the private zoo of Escobar.

Philippine museum brings deadly, lucrative galleon trade to life

Manila, Philippines

A full-size replica of a Spanish galleon stares out into Manila Bay, the centrepiece of a museum that will transport visitors back to the 17th century, when conscripted Philippine mariners hastened the era of globalisation.

The Museo del Galeon, which focuses on the hulking Espiritu Santo, aims to tell the story of Spain's 250-year-long Pacific galleon trade from the perspective of the Filipinos who built and crewed the towering vessels.

"This is a land with a great tradition of seafaring, but often under inhumane and degrading conditions," the museum's executive director Manuel Quezon told AFP, noting Filipinos still make up a quarter of the world's sailors.

"And it is one that we don't flinch from telling."

Built with forced labour in 1603, the Espiritu Santo was one of 181 treasure ships that made hundreds of trips between Manila and the Mexican port of Acapulco between 1565 and 1815 under harrowing conditions



This photo taken on April 23, 2026 shows visitors under the Galeon Espiritu Santo, a full-scale representation of a 17th century galleon, on display at the Museo del Galeon in Manila.

that historians say killed one in three crewmen.

"It was the first global trade, connecting three continents," said Francis Navarro, director of archives at the Ateneo de Manila University.

"It made the world smaller."

- Ravaged forests, families -

Sailing west across the Pacific for three months, the ships brought silver coins from Spain's American col-

onies to Manila, where they would be exchanged for luxury goods like silk, porcelain and jade from China.

The return voyage lasted as long as a year, with cargo then transported across Mexico by mule before heading to Spain, completing a trade loop between the old and new worlds.

The galleons brought more than silver to the Philippines. They brought ideas, disease, food, religion, fashion and more the things that

"made us who we are", Quezon said.

The colonial trade also ravaged the archipelago's forests and wrecked communities, with able-bodied men required to offer 40 days of unpaid service to fell trees and build ships under Spanish foremen.

Others were forced into service as sailors for up to 10 years at a time.

Cramped inside vessels overlaid with precious cargo, crewmembers sub-

sisted on a miserable diet of hardtack, an unleavened bread, and salted meat and fish that routinely spoiled and left many gravely ill.

"You had an astounding mortality rate of about 30 percent per voyage," Quezon said.

Deadly rebellions were sparked in some areas where galleons were built, Navarro added, including on the Cavite coast along Manila Bay.

The multi-continent trade would only end with Mexico's fight for independence from Spain.

- 'Filling in the blanks' -

Fourteen years after its conception, museumgoers will starting May 1 be able to walk the replica ship's decks, immersed in a giant, wrap-around LED display of star-studded night skies.

Artefacts from voyages line exhibits surrounding the vessel, including part of a Chinese tomb that once served as ballast in the hold of a galleon.

"We're filling the blanks in with this museum," Quezon told AFP on a tour ahead of its opening. □

Glacier block delays route-setting on Everest

Kathmandu, Nepal

A large ice chunk is blocking the climbing route to Everest's summit, officials said Friday, risking delays in the summit season at the world's highest peak.

A team of highly skilled mountaineers, known in Nepal as "icefall doctors", began fixing ropes and ladders on Mount Everest last month to prepare for the coming spring climbing season.

But a dangerous serac a block of glacial ice above the already treacherous Khumbu icefall has disrupted their work for nearly two weeks.

"We are waiting for it to melt, and expect that it will clear in a few days," icefall doctor Dawa Jangbu Sherpa told AFP.

Climbers must cross the Khumbu icefall, a constantly shifting maze of cre-

vasses and ice blocks, to reach higher on Everest.

"A team of experts and highly skilled guides will head there to monitor and devise an alternative plan if needed," said Himal Gautam, spokesman for Nepal's tourism department.



In this photograph taken on May 2, 2021 mountaineers trek along the Khumbu glacier near Everest base camp in the Mount Everest region of Solukhumbu district, some 140 km northeast of Nepal's capital Kathmandu.

"We are trying to ensure that there are no delays, even drop supplies by a helicopter, so that routes can be prepared on schedule," he added.

Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and attracts hundreds of climbers each

spring, when temperatures are warmer and winds calmer.

A climbing boom has made mountaineering a lucrative business since Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa made the first ascent in 1953.

The government has issued more than 900 climbing permits for various Himalayan mountains this season, including 410 for Everest.

A sea of tents to host more than 1,000 people -- foreign climbers and support staff -- has built up at the foot of Everest, readying to scale the 8,849-metre (29,032-foot) summit.

Expedition organiser Iswor Poudel, of Himalayan Guides Nepal, said that climbers would usually be doing acclimatisation climbs on Everest at this point.

"Most teams have reached

the base camp or are on their way," he said. "Climbers are going to neighbouring peaks now for preparations."

Around 700 people reached Everest's summit last year from the Nepali side, according to the tourism department, with another 100 climbers believed to have reached the peak from the northern side, via China.

In 2023, three Nepali guides were killed when a falling block of glacial ice swept them into a deep crevasse as they were crossing the Khumbu icefall with supplies.

Autumn summits on Everest in 2019 were also thwarted by a serac.

In 2014, an immense tumbling wall of snow, ice and rock killed 16 Nepali guides on the icefall, one of the deadliest accidents in the Himalayas. □



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Surf's Up: Favorite places to catch waves in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Whether you are a salt-seasoned surfer looking for a thrill, or just looking to wet your toes in a little ocean adventure, Aruba has amazing places to learn and practice surfing! Although more known for the calmer waters of Palm Beach, Eagle Beach and Mangel Halto, Aruba also has some special places to thrill your senses. Because of strong winds and breezes, Aruba is perfect for wind and kite surfing. You will surely notice kites in the air as you drive around the wilder, rougher areas on Aruba's east side.

There are plenty of surf shop rentals to help you with your gear, and there are also a lot of tutors if you're looking to try for the first time and need a little help. These can be found around the island, and will surely come in hand if you want to try a new experience!



With that said, here are Aruba's favorite surf spots!

Andicuri

Andicuri is recognized as the best place for body boarding. Because of the rough waves, this beach is better suited for those with more experience in surfing. However, the beach with two bluffs one on each side is worth a visit, if only to watch the exciting show presented by the surfers.

To go to Andicuri, you will need a 4x4 vehicle and drive from the ex-Natural Bridge Center. Alternatively, you can make it an adventure by going on a hike! The scenery is unique and beautiful on its own.

Reaching Andicuri Beach can be an adventure in itself, as it can be difficult to find and is only accessible by 4x4 vehicle or walking from the ex-Natural Bridge

center, but the impressive scenery makes it all worthwhile!

Arashi

Arashi, a beach located close to the California Lighthouse, is a good spot for learning and having fun – if you're lucky! The waves at Arashi are usually calm, but with just the right weather, a swell forms attracting all the local surfers to the area.

Boca Grandi

Boca Grandi is at the most southern spot in Aruba, and is a popular spot with experienced surfers. Close to the famous Red Anchor and our beloved Sunrise City San Nicolas, a trip to Boca Grandi can easily turn into an all-day trip to this area of the island.

With a beautiful beach (although it is not allowed to swim here, because of strong currents), you

can enjoy a relaxing time combing the beach for driftwood, coral, and little crabs and snails.

Hadicurari

Here is where you will find most of the action for surfers in Aruba. With a variety of surf shops and schools in this area, you will find it easy to get in on the action. Hadicurari is also the site of the Aruba Hi Winds World Challenge, which takes place usually in June/July, and it is the largest windsurfing competition in the Caribbean!

Malmok

If you're a beginner, this is your spot. There are also various shops to rent gear and receive lessons, facilitating learning and just trying out a new experience. The beach is also popular for paddleboarding and other watersport activities. □

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

(Oranjestad)— The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock

(1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact,

he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. Made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the tri-



angle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for

the cah'i orgel is the "tinglingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.



Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations



(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your “off-road” trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation

is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach, and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding “mondi”*. This is also one of the few sites to



contain prehistoric markings of our indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breathtaking view of the Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and

the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.

Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer and more accessible to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders

that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat boulder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south.

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!□

**Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mondi!*

Check out the Museum of Industry in San Nicolas!

Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. In San Nicolas, we have the Museum of Industry Aruba, where visitors can learn about the many industries that once thrived on the island. Take this opportunity to learn about our island

and experience a different day beyond the beach.

Museum of Industry Aruba

The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas. This museum presents the history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is

situated in the Water Tower and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments fund in 2003 so it could be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruban Museum Foundation (FMA), which is a foundation that maintains, preserves, and protects the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information check out their Facebook page: Museum of Industry Aruba.□



Editor's note: Pictures are property of the respective museums.



LABOR DAY

B

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G

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\$35,915

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Friday, May 1 | 1pm

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Progressive within 52 Calls
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Progressive within 53+ Calls
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*Progressive within 50 calls, amount unless hit before 5/1/26. **Except on Progressive.

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Game 2	Large Diamonds	\$100
Game 3	Lucky 7	\$100
Game 4	Letter H	\$100
30 Minute Break / Pick 5 Winners		
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Game 6	Postage Stamps	\$200
Game 7	Letter T	\$200
Game 8	Full Card	\$500

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Birds of Aruba

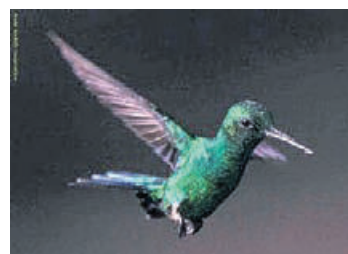
ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Bird-life Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation

publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful



and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our



Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top



pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory. English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje). □

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect.

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



(Oranjestad)— Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the

body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have



a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes. □

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris



Article by Etnia Nativa

WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!

Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Episode CCCL - 350

Rio Grande: Gone, Forgotten.

In this episode, Etnia Nativa explores how Aruba's cultural heritage is being commodified as "progress," questioning whether the island's identity is being sold for development.

At the roundabout near St. Anne's Church, the usual bustle of traffic and tourism continues, but the north-western corner no longer hosts the Rio Grande Store. Once a typical Aruban cunucu house, its walls were painted in changing colors over the years.

No plaque, no preservation sign—no hint that one of Noord's most iconic historic structures ever stood here, serving as a cornerstone of community life. Instead, all that remains is a simple "For Sale" sign. The Rio Grande is gone, replaced by a divided empty lot, its disappearance unacknowledged and ignored.

Built in 1921, Rio Grande was no ordinary building. Designed by master builder Janchi Christiaans, it embodied a distinctive architectural identity—blending Caribbean practicality with European influence. It served as both a commercial and social hub in Noord, long before the towering hotels came to dominate Aruba's coastline and economy.

Yet, its destruction wasn't due to a natural disaster or structural failure. It was the result of a decision.

And according to heritage advocates, that decision followed a troubling pattern all too familiar in Aruba: the quiet erosion of historical value, sacrificed at the altar of economic pressures.

There was no national referendum. No binding heritage law strong enough to prevent its demolition. No sustained public outcry. Only permits, property rights,

and an unsettling silence.

Over the past 30 years, Aruba has become a key player in the 'erasure economy,' undergoing a radical transformation. With the boom in tourism, land values skyrocketed, especially in areas like Noord, now one of the island's most commercially sought-after regions. This shift ushered in a new hierarchy: beach views prioritized over historical context, the speed of development over cultural value, and private property over collective memory.

Rio Grande—far from an isolated case—found itself directly in the path of this transformation. Like so many buildings without legal protection, it became expendable. Its disappearance is part of a troubling pattern. Across Aruba, structures of significant historical value have been demolished or left to decay beyond repair. Cases like the House of the Government (1830), once the island's administrative center, the early 20th-century Police Headquarters, and private residences such as the Oduber family home in Oranjestad—linked to prominent political and cultural figures—all share a common thread.

Each case reveals the same underlying

ing factors: weak enforcement of the law, delayed recognition, and a lack of economic incentives for redevelopment.

Rio Grande's controversy isn't just that it vanished, but that its land is now being redeveloped without regard for its history. Its cultural legacy is ignored because there's no law forcing developers to preserve or acknowledge it.

Organizations like Monumentenfonds Aruba have repeatedly warned that Aruba's preservation framework is reactive, not proactive. The situation is dire: by the time a building is officially recognized as a monument, it often already suffers from structural damage, competing private interests, or pending renovation plans.

Critics contend that, in practice, the system documents loss rather than preventing it.

Aruba's international image is built on its idyllic beaches and booming tourist infrastructure. Yet beneath this success lies a silent erosion of cultural value, one that isn't captured by tourism statistics. Places like Rio Grande carried an intangible heritage, defined by community identity, unique architecture, and generational continuity.

Without this intangible heritage, Noord—and all of Aruba—risk becoming geographically recognizable but historically anonymous.

Intangible cultural losses raise a question that Aruba has yet to fully confront: when heritage stands in the way of profit, it is left unprotected.

There is no official plaque where Rio Grande once stood.

There is no conservation area to preserve its site.

There is no public acknowledgment of its disappearance.

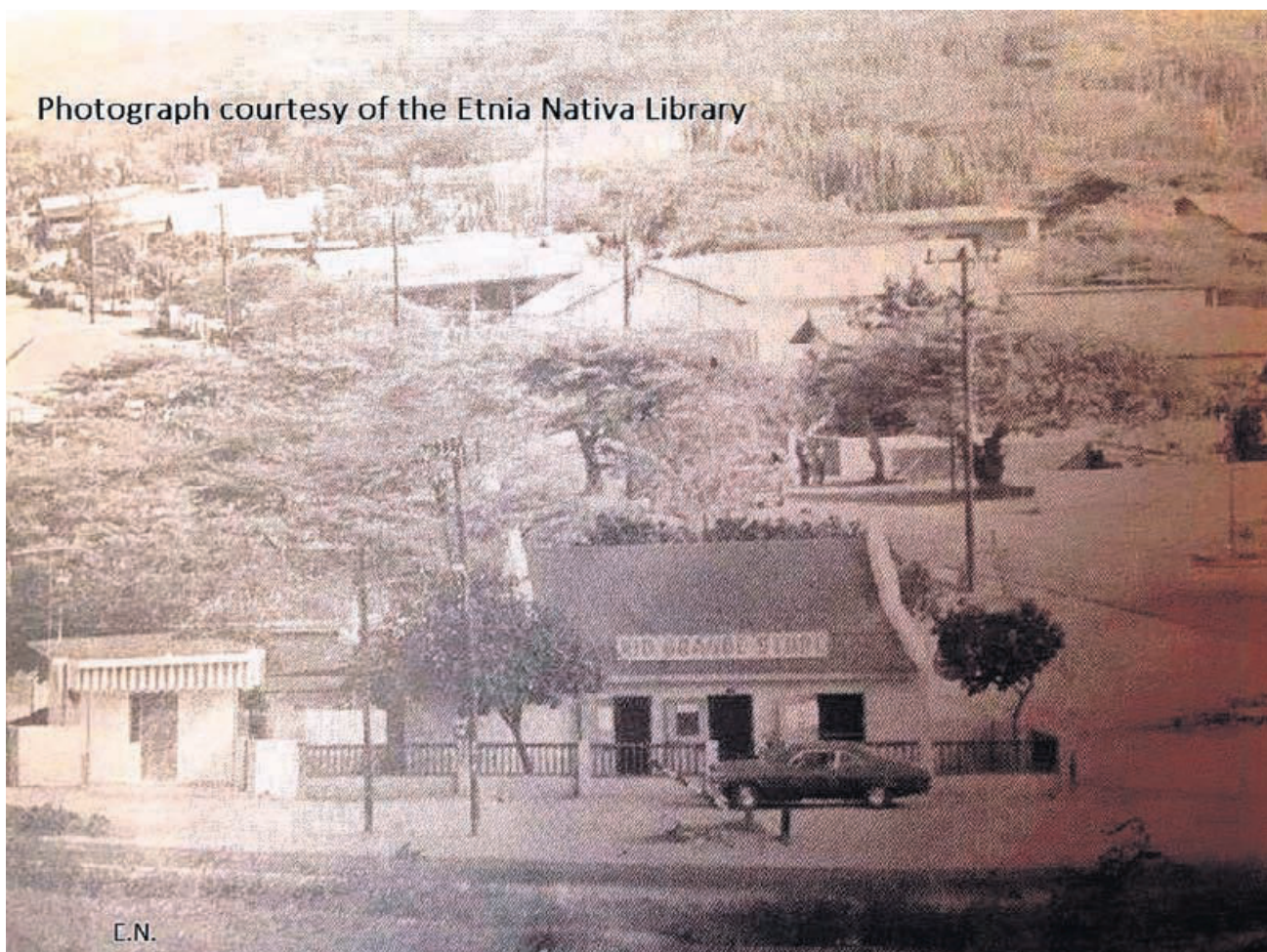
Only a piece of land—valuable, transferable, and completely disconnected from its past.□

From those eager to go beyond the surface of Aruba's postcard beauty, Etnia Nativa offers something rare: a deeply personal encounter with the island's ancestral soul. Because in Aruba, heritage is not just preserved—it is lived.

Only by appointment:

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etniana03@gmail.com



Photograph courtesy of the Etnia Nativa Library

E.N.

Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need



to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules

don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out head-

ing east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located farther west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □



CROSSWORD

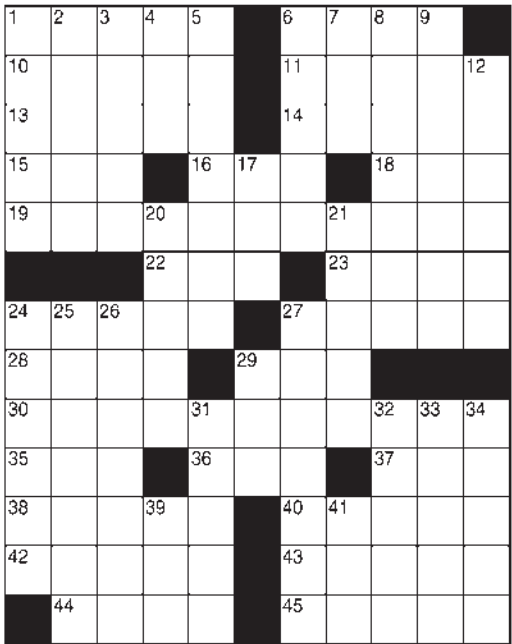
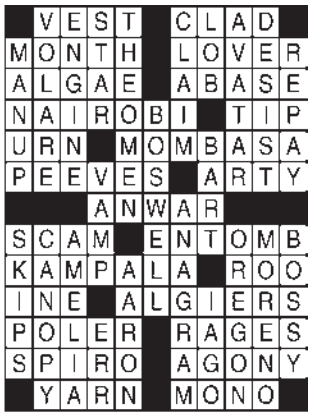
By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

ACROSS

- 45 Shoulder muscles, for short
- 1 Victimizes, with "on"
- 6 Curving paths
- 10 Metal fastener
- 11 Billies and nannies
- 13 Like lambs
- 14 Advice
- 15 Tennis court divider
- 16 Touch lightly
- 18 Lupino of films
- 19 Top chess player
- 22 Have lunch
- 23 Single
- 24 Put into boxes
- 27 Young stallions
- 28 Like the desert
- 29 Gallery fill
- 30 Banquet leader
- 35 Total
- 36 Orange tuber
- 37 Bullfight cry
- 38 Deplete
- 40 Noggins
- 42 Basil-based sauce
- 43 Precise
- 44 Letters after cees

DOWN

- 1 Plug part
- 2 Rafting spot
- 3 Musical set in Argentina
- 4 Longing
- 5 Mom's new hubby
- 6 Heart-burn
- 7 Harry's friend
- 8 Senate setting
- 9 Class member
- 12 Rude looks
- 17 Quantity: Abbr.
- 20 Must have
- 21 Casino machines
- 24 Burger topper
- 25 Awakened
- 26 Cat with colorful points
- 27 Like one-room apartments
- 29 Doc's org.
- 31 Printing goofs
- 32 Sum
- 33 Put in office
- 34 Work breaks
- 39 Western Indian
- 41 Chopping tool



A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

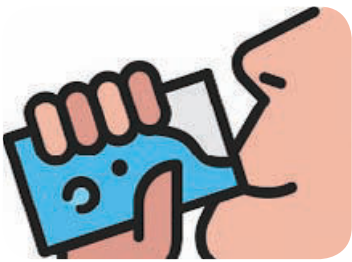
5-15 CRYPTOQUOTE

M F R P J I G U P B T C F G P Z M
F R M B B P U . P G K I C Z E H C I F
P V Z , Q P V K M G ' Z K M Z K O C Z .

— B V F F C M G R B P N I B D
Cryptoquote: YOU ARE THE
STORYTELLER OF YOUR OWN LIFE, AND YOU
CAN CREATE YOUR OWN LEGEND, OR NOT. —
ISABEL ALLENDE

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

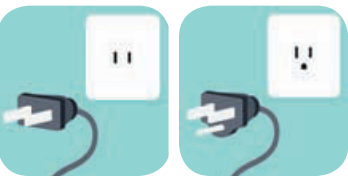
Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE	
02 SAT	CARIBBEAN PRINCESS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C
05 TUE	CELEBRITY SILHOUTTE Arrival: 08:00 Departure: 17:00 Berth: B
	CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C
06 WED	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 11:59 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
12 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B
	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
19 TUE	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B
	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
20 WED	ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: I
	CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C
21 THU	CARNIVAL VENEZIA Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C
26 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B
	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

		8		7			2	
		4	1	8			6	3
	5	7						
7	8				4			6
			2			8		5
	6			3			1	
	1		6		3		8	7
	2	3			7	6	5	1
8		6				2		

Difficulty: ★★★

Answer to previous puzzle

1	8	7	6	4	2	9	3	5
4	2	3	5	7	9	8	6	1
9	5	6	3	8	1	7	2	4
5	6	2	7	1	8	3	4	9
8	3	9	4	6	5	1	7	2
7	1	4	9	2	3	6	5	8
6	7	1	2	9	4	5	8	3
3	4	8	1	5	6	2	9	7
2	9	5	8	3	7	4	1	6

Difficulty: ★★

4/28

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'Natural' birth control risks unwanted pregnancy, experts warn

Paris, France

After taking the pill for a decade, Elodie Monnier Legrand decided to try "natural" birth control, an increasingly popular trend that requires tracking fertility to avoid becoming pregnant.

"I wanted my body to return to its natural state," the French 30-year-old business owner told AFP.

However after getting two abortions within six months, she discovered the app she was using had slightly miscalculated her fertility cycle.

"It's not an exact science," Legrand said.

She is one of a rising number of women who are abandoning hormonal contraception such as the pill.

In France, 7.5 percent of women used natural contraceptive methods in 2023, rising from 4.6 percent in 2016, according to the INSERM institute.

Helping drive this trend are influencers on social media, who often promote natural birth control as a way for women to "liberate" themselves from the hormonal effects of the pill. However experts warn that some common claims about the pill's side effects represent misinformation and that methods based on tracking fertility require strict adherence to be effective.

Geoffroy Robin, a gynaecologist at the University Hospital of Lille in France, told AFP that the interest in natural methods was fuelled by "a climate of hormone-phobia".

He also pointed out that the pill had long been seen as a "tool of women's emancipation".

- Different methods -

Louise, a 26-year-old in France who did not want to give her surname, told AFP that "hormonal contraception was a complete disaster" for her.

When she was 18, her body rejected a hormonal IUD. After getting an implant, she said she suffered from



This photograph taken on March 23, 2023, shows different boxes of birth control pills on a pharmacy, in Colomiers, southwestern France.

side effects including weight gain, mood swings and depression.

For the last six years, she has been using the calendar method of natural birth control.

This requires calculating the window when women are fertile which is around 10 days a month and abstaining from sex during this period.

The temperature method involves daily checks to detect if women's bodies have gotten a little warmer, which happens during ovulation.

For the "Billings" method, women must inspect their vagina daily to see if there is a build-up of cervical mucus. The "sympto-thermal" method combines the latter two techniques.

The embrace of natural contraception also called fertility awareness comes

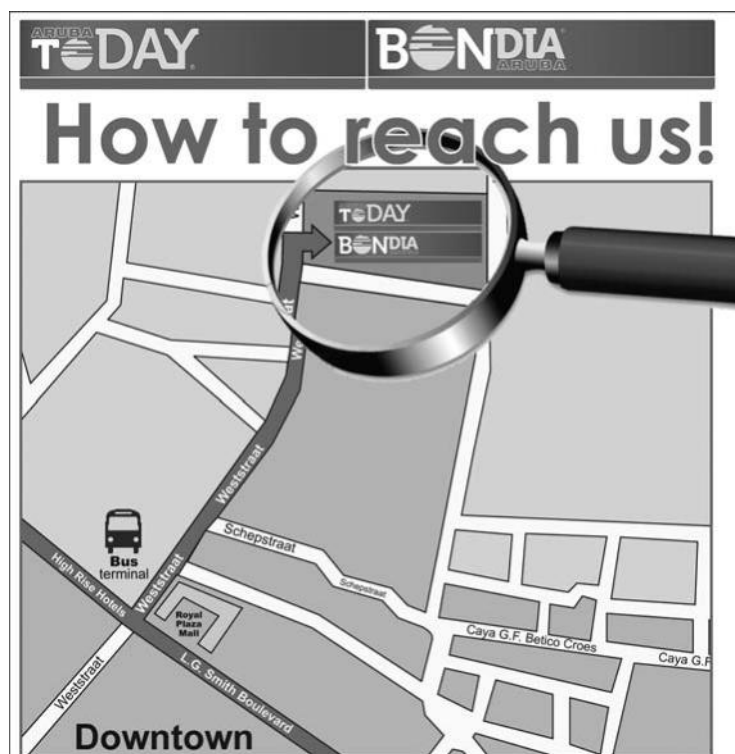
as the use of the pill has declined in many countries.

A study published last year in BMJ Sexual & Reproductive Health estimated that hormonal contraception in England and Wales fell from 19 percent in 2018 to 11 percent in 2023.

The research also suggested there was a link between the increasing use of natural birth control and a rising number of abortions. □

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House for sale

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5 to 10 min drive to mangel halto

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Hospital
7:00 pm/10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Oduber
Tel. 582 1780

San Nicolas: Seroe Preto
Tel. 584 4833

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police 100

Police Oranjestad 527 3140

Police Noord 527 3200

Police Sta. Cruz 527 2900

Police San Nicolas 584 5000

Police Tipline 11141

Ambulance 911

Fire Dept. 115

Red Cross 582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas 587 5900

Prof. Taxi 588 0035

Taxi D.T.S. 587 2300

Taxi Serv. Aruba 583 3232

A1 Taxi Serv. 280 2828

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank

Tel. 588 0002

FAVI- Visually Impaired

Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous

Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous

Tel. 583 8989

Against Domestic Violence(FCVR)

Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes

Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention

Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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Tel. 118

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Jazz legend John Coltrane’s son hits the high notes

Wroclaw, Poland
Ravi Coltrane has a tough task: honor his father John and fellow legend Miles Davis without imitating them, he tells AFP, beer in hand during an interview in Poland.
The younger Coltrane has teamed up with multiple Grammy winner Terence Blanchard for a series of concerts across Europe marking the centennials of his father and Davis which will culminate at the revered Grand Rex in Paris -- a venue that meant a lot to both men.
“If you’re doing a tribute to somebody... the assumption might be that we’re going to be imitating their style,” Coltrane named after Ravi Shankar, the Indian sitar player who inspired The Beatles and a host of other Western musicians told AFP in Wroclaw.
“To really truly honor them, it’s not to copy them, but to peer in and try to find our own voices within the repertoire that they play,” he said.



United States’ saxophonist Ravi Coltrane gestures during an AFP interview ahead of a concert in honor of Miles Davis and John Coltrane, at which he will perform with trumpeter and composer Terence Blanchard in Wroclaw as part of the Jazz nad Odra festival on April 26, 2026.

His collaborator, five-time Grammy-winning trumpet player and composer Blanchard, said the younger Coltrane was a resounding success like his father.
“It’s not about his last name,” he said of Coltrane, who has performed with the likes of Carlos Santana, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner and Chick Corea.
“It’s about what he’s doing as an artist.”
“The difficult thing to do is to find our own personal way with the music,” he said, calling it “more rewarding” as a result.

Together on stage, the pair strike contrasting notes -- Blanchard raising his horn to the ceiling while a demurer Coltrane undulates through his solos with depth and precision.

- ‘The hardest thing’ -
While not related to Miles Davis, Blanchard like many trumpet players is deeply influenced by the jazz great, who was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and branded “the most revered jazz trumpeter of all time” by Rolling Stone magazine.

Like Coltrane, he does not emulate Davis.
“The easiest thing would be for me to go up there and try to play like Miles Davis... yet that would be the hardest thing,” he said.
“You can’t recreate that time from which those things were created,” he added, referencing the social and political tumult of the 1960s.
“There was a lot of suffering going on in the world,” he said, adding: “They (Davis and Coltrane) didn’t turn a blind eye to that.”
Blanchard, who has written

two operas and dozens of film and television scores, is passionate about mentoring and educating younger musicians.
“That’s the thing I always tell my students,” he said.
“Be a person first ... and learn how to use all of the tools musically to express what it is you’re feeling inside.”
Ravi Coltrane said it was Blanchard who came to him with the idea of doing a joint tribute, something he might have otherwise turned down.
“He’s probably the only one I would have agreed to do this with,” he said, reminiscing on their first meetings in New York in the 1990s, where Coltrane went to begin his career.
It’s a harkening back to the collaboration between Davis and the older Coltrane whose 1959 joint album “Kind of Blue” is lauded by many critics as the greatest jazz record ever made.

- Paris is a ‘special place’ -
Ahead of the concert at the Grand Rex, Coltrane and Blanchard reflected on the French capital’s influence on their mentors, themselves, and the genre.
“Paris has always had a special place in my heart,” Blanchard said, recalling his New Orleans origins and the French influences he grew up around.□

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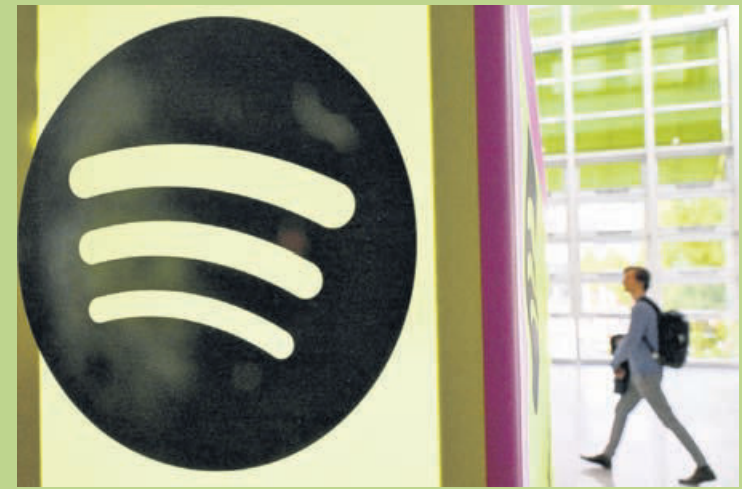
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Spotify reaches 761 million active users

Stockholm, Sweden
Music streaming giant Spotify said Tuesday that first-quarter revenue rose as its



A person walks past a banner with an Spotify logo at the Frankfurt book fair on October 17, 2024, on the second day of the world’s biggest book fair in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany.

number of monthly active users reached 761 million at the end of the quarter, with the number of paying subscribers hitting 293 million.
The result was just above the company’s guidance of 759 million monthly active users (MAU), while the number of paying subscribers was in line with its guidance.
“We surpassed 760 million MAU, delivered on the subscriber growth we aimed to achieve, and saw healthy engagement from existing users, reactivations and new users alike,” co-chief executive Alex Norstrom

said in a statement.
Spotify founder Daniel Ek left the role as CEO at the start of 2026, handing over the reins to co-CEOs Norstrom and Gustav Soderstrom.
But Ek retains an active role as executive chairman.
Revenue for the first quarter came in at 4.5 billion euros (\$5.3 billion), up eight percent from a year earlier.
Operating income meanwhile rose 40 percent to 715 million euros.
Looking forward, the company said it expected to reach 778 million MAUs and 299 paying subscribers by the end of April.□

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Thunder sweep Suns, Denver avoids ouster, Pistons on the brink

Washington, United States

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 points and the defending champion Oklahoma City Thunder swept into the second round of the NBA playoffs on Monday with a 131-122 victory at Phoenix.

The top-seeded Thunder captured the Western Conference best-of-seven series 4-0, completing a third consecutive sweep in the opening round.

"We just came in ready," said Gilgeous-Alexander. "Love to play basketball, a group full of great kids that have fun together."

"We do it for each other. None of us are selfish. We all want the next man to succeed and when you have those three things and put them together you get success."

Oklahoma City will meet either the Los Angeles Lakers or Houston Rockets in a second-round series. The Lakers lead that matchup 3-1.

"Ultimately, we've got to get better in the days be-



Shai Gilgeous-Alexander #2 of the Oklahoma City Thunder reacts during the fourth quarter against the Phoenix Suns in Game Four of the First Round of the NBA Western Conference Playoffs at Mortgage Matchup Center on April 27, 2026 in Phoenix, Arizona.

tween our next opponent," Gilgeous-Alexander said. The Thunder became the first team to reach the second round on the same night the upstart Orlando Magic pushed Eastern Conference top seed Detroit to the brink of elimination with a 94-88 triumph to seize a

3-1 series advantage.

The Denver Nuggets avoided an early exit as Serbian center Nikola Jokic had a triple double with 27 points, 16 assists and 12 rebounds to spark the hosts over Minnesota 125-113, pulling Denver within 3-2 against the Timberwolves.

Gilgeous-Alexander, the reigning NBA Most Valuable Player who had a playoff career high 42 points in a game three victory, added eight assists to spark a visiting Thunder squad that boasts the top post-season scoring attack

and defensive statistics.

Chet Holmgren added 24 points and 12 rebounds for the Thunder, who also had 22 points from Ajay Mitchell and 18 points and 12 rebounds from Isaiah Hartenstein.

Devin Booker led Phoenix with 24 points.

At Orlando, Desmond Bane scored 22 points, hitting 5-of-10 shots from three-point range to lead the Magic, who can send off the Pistons with a victory on Wednesday in Detroit.

Franz Wagner scored 19 points for Orlando before being benched with a sore right calf while Paolo Banchero added 18 and grabbed eight rebounds.

The Pistons, whose 60-22 record topped the East, must win three in a row to avoid an epic ouster at the hands of eighth seed Orlando, which went 45-37.

Cade Cunningham led Detroit with 25 points while Tobias Harris added 20 for the Pistons, who committed 20 turnovers, twice as many as Orlando. □

Felix, 40, says she plans comeback for LA Olympics

Los Angeles, United States

Allyson Felix, the most decorated woman in Olympic athletics history with 11 medals, says she is planning a comeback at age 40 with her eyes on the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Felix told Time magazine in a story published online on Monday that she is preparing for what she hopes will be a sixth Olympics in her hometown when she will be 42.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime homecoming," Felix said of her Olympic dream. "And it is the only thing powerful enough to pull me back."

Felix is the most decorated American Olympian in ath-

letics.

She captured her only solo gold in the 200 meters at London in 2012, added gold in the 4x400 relay in 2008 in Beijing, 2012 in London, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro and 2021 in Tokyo and won 4x100 titles in 2012 and 2016.

She took 200m silver in 2004 and 2008, 400 silver in 2016 and 400 bronze at Tokyo. Felix has championed women returning to competition after having children. She gave birth to a daughter in 2018 and a son in 2024.

Felix attended the 2024 Paris Olympics as a specta-

tor and found she yearned for her competitive days.

"It was definitely mixed emotions," Felix told the magazine. "There were moments where I was like, 'Oh, this is so great. It's so exciting to be in the stands and on the other side.'

"And then there were moments where I was, 'You know, I miss this feeling.'" Felix also won a record 20 medals at the World Championships, the most for any woman or man, including 14 titles.

She won the 200 crown in 2005, 2007 and 2009 and the 400 in 2015 as well as three 4x100 relay titles, a

4x400 mixed relay crown in 2019 and six women's 4x400 relay golds, includ-

ing at what was her farewell meet, the 2022 worlds in Eugene, Oregon. □



Allyson Felix speaks onstage at the The Female Force hosted by Hearst Magazines at Hearst Tower on March 03, 2026 in New York City.

Sinner queries schedule, surges into Madrid Open quarters

Madrid, Spain

Jannik Sinner suggested the Madrid Open organisers should reconsider their tournament scheduling to avoid late-night finishes like the one Rafael Jodar experienced in the third round on Sunday.

In a rare 11:00 am start on Tuesday, Sinner moved past British 19th seed Cameron Norrie 6-2, 7-5 to reach the quarter-finals.

He explained he was put on first on Manolo Santana Stadium so that Jodar, his potential next opponent, would be scheduled in the afternoon to give the Spaniard time to recover from his three-set win over Joao Fonseca that ended at 1:00 am on Monday morning.

"It's quite unusual for me," Sinner told Tennis TV about



Italy's Jannik Sinner returns the ball to Britain's Cameron Norrie during their 2026 ATP Tour Madrid Open tennis tournament singles match at the Caja Magica in Madrid, on April 28, 2026.

The Italian world number one is just the second man in series history to win his first 20 Masters 1000 matches of the season, joining Novak Djokovic, who achieved that feat twice, in 2011 and 2015.

Later in the day, Jodar's dream run on home soil continued with a convincing 7-5, 6-0 thumping of world number 66 Vit Kopriya.

The Madrid-born wildcard advanced to the biggest quarter-final of his young career, and improved to 12-1 on clay so far this season.

"I'm super happy with my level today and with my level this in this tournament," Jodar said, who once again had Real Madrid footballer Jude Bellingham supporting him from the stands.

"It's always special to play at home in front of many people that you know and they come to support you."

- Ruud edges out Tsitsipas -
Casper Ruud fought back from the brink to keep his title defence alive with a 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/3) victory over former finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas.

In a high-quality three-hour contest, Tsitsipas led 5-3 in the decider, holding two match points, and served for the victory at 5-4, but Ruud, who was 0/11 in break points up until then, found a way to take down the Greek's serve and went on to clinch the tie-break.

"I was on the brink of being on the way home already, so just really happy and proud the way I fought back," said the Norwegian 12th seed.

Last week's Barcelona champion Arthur Fils advanced to the quarter-finals at the Caja Magica with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Argentine 25th seed Tomas Martin Etcheverry.

Fils has made the quarter-finals in six of the seven tournaments he has contested so far in 2026.

The Frenchman will take on Jiri Lehecka, who beat sixth-seeded Italian Lorenzo Musetti 6-3, 6-3, for a place in the last four. □

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his early kick-off.

"I don't know the last time I played at 11. But for me it doesn't matter what time. I try to do my best. There was a question if it would be me or Jodar to play at 4. But I think it's right he plays at 4, because he finished very, very late.

"But at the same time, I feel like we need to make some adjustments to the scheduling of the day. Two matches (starting) from 8pm is very late.

"Even though you have one day in between. But still it's very, very late.

"You finish at 1:30am, and you need to eat, you need to have treatment, so it's very late. But we try to adapt ourselves, our bodies, our minds, so from my side it was a good performance today."

In his first-ever meeting with Norrie, Sinner won 81 percent of his first-serve points, and 63 percent of the points behind his second delivery on his way to notching a 25th consecutive victory at the Masters 1000 level.

Sinner, who is bidding to reach the semi-finals for the first time in the Spanish capital, will next face 19-year-old Jodar in what will be a highly-anticipated last-eight showdown.